



**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** April 15, 2011  
**To:** Houghton Community Council  
**From:** Angela Ruggeri, AICP, Senior Planner  
Eric Shields, AICP, Planning Director  
**Subject:** **CENTRAL HOUGHTON NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN –ZON09-00016**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review proposed Open Space and Parks Element and Transportation Element to the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan and provide direction to staff.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Houghton Community Council (HCC) discussed the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan content and format at the March 28, 2011 HCC meeting and gave staff direction. The Open Space and Parks Element and the Transportation Element are attached for discussion at the April 25, 2011 HCC meeting.

Open Space and Parks

The Parks Board reviewed the proposed Open Space and Parks Element for Central Houghton at their April 13 meeting and unanimously approved the draft with no changes (see Attachment 1).

Transportation

Attachment 2 is a draft of the Transportation section of the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan for HCC Review. A draft of this section will go to the Transportation Commission for comment on April 27.

**NEXT STEPS:**

A tentative schedule for 2011 has been included below. This schedule may be adjusted due to workload.

- May 23: Return to HCC with remaining Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan sections
- May 26: Draft plan to Planning Commission for comment
- June 23: Draft back to HCC with Planning Commission comments
- June: Neighborhood Advisory Group update  
Public Open House  
SEPA Addendum & CTED 60 day review

June/July: HCC/PC joint public hearing  
July: HCC/PC Recommendation  
September: City Council Study  
September: City Council Final Action  
October: HCC Final Action

**Attachments:**

1. Draft Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan Open Space and Parks section
2. Draft Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan Transportation section

cc: File ZON09-00016  
Kirkland Planning Commission  
Central Houghton Neighborhood Advisory Group

## 1. Open Space and Parks

There are three publicly owned parks and two public school-based recreation sites within the Central Houghton Neighborhood. The neighborhood has been fortunate to have a high degree of community involvement in the development and maintenance of its park facilities.

**Watershed Park** is an undeveloped 73-acre park which takes up a large amount of the southeastern portion of the neighborhood. It is heavily wooded with varying terrain including steep slopes, and features a series of soft-surface walking trails. The Green Kirkland Partnership, an alliance between the City of Kirkland, nonprofit partners and the community, has identified this property as a high priority for removal of invasive plants and for revegetation activities for their urban reforestation program.

Any future development of the park should be undertaken following a community-based master planning process. Considerations for a park master plan should include protection and enhancement of natural resources and minimizing potential impacts to surrounding residential areas.

**Phyllis A. Needy Houghton Neighborhood Park** is a 0.50 acre neighborhood park adjacent to 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.E. It includes a small playground, a basketball hoop, and picnicking tables. A restroom is also available on the fenced site. No further development of this park is anticipated.

**Carillon Woods** is an 8.7 acre neighborhood park that features trails, interpretive signage, native plantings, and a children's playground. Approximately 2 acres of the property are fenced off to protect several deactivated artesian wells, steep slopes, wetlands, and emerging springs which serve as the headwaters for Carillon Creek. As with Watershed Park, reforestation efforts through the Green Kirkland Partnership are a high priority for this property. Although no further development is anticipated in this park, the removal of existing wells, pumping systems, and other facilities related to former use of the site by a local water district should occur in the future.

The Carillon Woods area was historically the source of the water supply for Yarrow Bay and was designated Water District #1. It was later purchased from the Water District by the City through a park bond and its creation and use were determined through several public workshops. It contains a unique balance of developed and natural areas, since the northeast corner includes a playground and public art, while the rest of the park is being actively restored to its native condition.

**B.E.S.T. High School** is on a 10 acre site and is part of the Lake Washington School District (LWSD). The City has constructed and maintains a multi-purpose playfield at B.E.S.T. High School through an interlocal agreement with the LWSD. The playfield is available for both organized and informal sports activities such as baseball/softball, soccer, and football. A small gymnasium at the school is also available on a limited basis for community recreation programming, with scheduling and use dictated by LWSD.

**International Community School (ICS)** is located at the north end of the neighborhood. This approximately 11- acre school site provides a playfield for youth sports, as well as space for informal recreation activities for nearby residents. Additionally, the site provides children's

playground equipment, an outdoor sport court, and indoor recreation space on a limited basis. All facilities on the property are maintained by LWSD.

***Goal CH-10:*** *Ensure adequate park and recreation facilities in the Central Houghton Neighborhood.*

The City has a level of service (LOS) goal of locating a neighborhood park within a quarter-mile radius of each household in Kirkland. This desired LOS standard is being met for the Central Houghton Neighborhood. LOS within the neighborhood is also enhanced by the proximity of parks just outside the defined neighborhood boundaries, including Terrace Park, Houghton Beach Park, Marsh Park, and Everest Park.

***Policy CH-10.1:*** *Pursue acquisition of property in Central Houghton for recreation purposes wherever possible.*

The City should seek opportunities to acquire land to expand parks as properties adjacent to existing parks become available. It is also important to provide and maintain a diversity of park recreation opportunities for the neighborhood. In addition, unopened street ends should be developed and expanded into park and open space areas for public enjoyment where feasible.

## 1. Transportation

The circulation patterns in the Central Houghton Neighborhood are well established and allow through traffic to flow north and south on 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE which is designated as a minor arterial. NE 68<sup>th</sup> Street which forms the northern boundary of the neighborhood is also a minor arterial. Another east/west connector is provided by NE 52<sup>nd</sup> Street which is designated a collector street connecting 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to Lake Washington Blvd. NE 53<sup>rd</sup> Street between 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Interstate 405 is also a collector street. All other streets within the neighborhood are classified as neighborhood access streets. They provide access to adjacent residences and connect to the collectors and minor arterial.

***Goal CH-9:*** *Improve mobility along 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE as a major vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle corridor through the neighborhood.*

108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is designated as a minor arterial and provides the primary north-south route through the Central Houghton Neighborhood. It also provides local access for a substantial number of residences, schools and also the businesses in the northern portion of the neighborhood.

***Policy CH-9.1:*** *Maintain the minor arterial designation for 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.*

Traffic on 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE can be heavy, particularly during morning and evening commute periods. This congestion restricts local access to and from 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and creates conflicts for pedestrians, including children arriving at and leaving the schools, bicyclists, and adjacent residents. Future traffic levels should be monitored and necessary measures undertaken to mitigate impacts.

***Policy CH-9.2:*** *Enhance attractiveness and accessibility of 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE for all modes of transportation.*

A master plan or set of standards for 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE should be established through a public process. The plan should consider installation of streetscape amenities such as pedestrian lighting, street furniture, and low level landscaping to enhance the pedestrian experience and the continuation, widening and signing of bicycle lanes.

***Policy CH-9.3:*** *Implementation of street improvements should occur through both the City's Capital Improvement Program process and through site specific private development.*

The means to implement improvements should be determined on a comprehensive area-wide basis and to the extent possible, on an incremental basis by encouraging or requiring the incorporation of improvements into private developments.

***Policy CH-9.4:*** *Support transportation measures that will reduce commuter or pass through traffic through the neighborhood.*

The City should support and encourage the following measures:

1. Alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles for commuting purposes, such as public transportation, commuter pools, high-occupancy vehicles (HOV), and the investigation of other transportation modes such as light rail.
2. Improvements to the I-405/SR 520 corridors.

***Goal CH-10:*** Encourage mobility and the use of nonmotorized transportation by providing improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Nonmotorized transportation is part of the City's Active Transportation Plan and implemented through the Capital Improvement Program or through private development. The design of these improvements should enhance neighborhood access while fitting into the unique areas they traverse.

***Policy CH-10.1:*** Improve the pedestrian and bicycle circulation system as both a recreation amenity and non-motorized transportation option within the Central Houghton Neighborhood connecting to surrounding neighborhoods as well as regional connections and transit facilities.

The path/trail system shown in *Figures X and Y (the pedestrian and bike system maps to be added)* indicates the major elements of the pedestrian circulation system in the neighborhood. Pedestrian and bicycle pathways are part of the transportation system but also provide recreational opportunities.

***Policy CH-10.2:*** Support future development of the Eastside Rail Corridor as a multipurpose trail for pedestrian and bicycles with access points along the corridor.

The unused BNSF railroad right-of-way, known as the Eastside Rail Corridor, provides an opportunity for a bike, pedestrian and rail transportation system. Regardless of the function of the Corridor, the following principles should be considered so that the design will:

- Serve as a gateway to the City.
- Provide neighborhood pedestrian and bicycle connections, with the highest priority access points at NE 52<sup>nd</sup>, NE 60<sup>th</sup> and NE 68<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- Be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.
- Ensure a high degree of safety.
- Show environmental stewardship.